

14th January 2019

At a Meeting of Ashdon Parish Council held at the Village Hall on Monday 14th January 2019, at 7.30pm.

Present.

Councillors Mike Elsey, Steve Hayler, Victoria Moriarty, Philip Player (Chairman), John Thorn and Jo Wheatley

Cllr. Howard Rolfe (UDC), Mr. Nigel Brown (UDC), Mr. David Green (Clerk)

1. Apologies for Absence.

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr. Simon Walsh (ECC)

2. Public Representations

Ms. Jane Gray brought the ongoing Stansted Airport application to Members' attention in that the flight path passed directly over her property to the east of the village, some aircraft being at 3000ft. She asked the Council to write objecting to the application, noting this noise anomaly and suggesting that Ashdon, being under the flight path, should qualify for compensation under the S106 agreement. The Chairman assured Ms. Gray that this would be done.

Ms. Gray also suggested that Ashdon should seriously consider having a Neighbourhood Plan. Such a plan would lay out the future development of the village; would be a legal document when accepted by the District Council, and would have a considerable influence on future planning decisions. The plan should be community driven and the process started by holding an open village meeting. She suggested that Rachel Hogger (UDC) should be invited to address the meeting to outline the plan and its requirements. Cllr. Rolfe fully concurred with Ms. Gray's suggestion reiterating many of the points she made. The Chairman said that this would be looked into with urgency.

3. Address by Mr. Nigel Brown, District Council Development Manager

Mr. Nigel Brown addressed the meeting on planning matters having introduced himself as the District Council Development Manager and also head of Enforcement. The Local plan was nearing completion and would be presented to the Inspectors in the near future. Team Leader on Enforcement was Maria Shoesmith with a team of planning officers dealing with applications pertaining to the Ashdon area. The 2005 Plan was still in force but changes in planning regulations had nullified some aspects of the plan which had, in the past, protected the village. This included the village development limits. Matters taken into account when considering applications included "countryside at risk". It was difficult to refuse applications for five dwellings or less. Any application for over five dwellings would be dealt with by the planning committee; sites for the lesser applications would be visited by three or four members of the Planning Committee. Applications were "live" for three years. After three years a further application was required.

Ashdon is a Category1 village due to it having a school and pub, thus it is a "sustainable" village. Mr. Brown reiterated the earlier views that Ashdon should have a neighbourhood plan. Having such a plan would reduce the land supply requirement from five to three years and would protect the village from unwanted development. The Parish Council would set the parameters for future development and this would have greater

credence with the planning authorities. A plan would take at least two years to complete, would require scrutiny and some costs involved which would be advised. The village could also consider a "Community Land Bank". Such a land bank would provide land for future development of affordable dwellings over which the parish council would have the rights of allocation and or sale. Mr. Brown hoped that Ashdon, along with other villages in the district, would produce Village Development Plans thus forming a suite of plans in the district which would assist greatly in the future development of the district as a whole.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Brown for his most informative and interesting talk and said that the matters raised would be further investigated.

Mr. Brown left the meeting at this point.

4. County Councillor's Report. (Appendix i)

The County Councillor's Report was tabled in his absence.

5. District Councillor's Report.

Cllr. Rolfe said that the Local Plan would be submitted by the 24th January deadline. If accepted some items would give protection to Ashdon for future development, particularly the village development limits. The Local Government Settlement had been advised by the Government. The Rate Support Grant had been removed. The District Council would receive a small share of business rates but the largest share would go to the County Council to offset the future costs of healthcare and childrens' services. The future financially will be challenging but this would be offset by the investment in Chesterford Park. More suitable investment opportunities would be investigated to supplement income. The District Council Tax would increase by approximately 2.9%, less than £5/year for a Band D property. The bin collection rota was now back to normal following the Christmas period when the transfer stations had been closed. Despite the closures the Council had maintained a high standard of waste disposal to the credit of all those involved. The District Council would now major on litter. Litter picks would be organised in addition to those already organised locally. Prosecutions for litter would be sought along with trying to educate people not to despoil the district and to take a pride in their surroundings.

6. Declarations of Interest.

Cllr. Thorn declared a non pecuniary interest in matters concerning Stansted Airport as he was employed in the security section thereof.

7. Minutes.

Resolved – that the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 10th December 2018, previously circulated, be signed as a true record. (Cllr. Eelsey)

8. Matters Arising.

i. Playing Fields.

a. Development of All Saints Open Space. The signage on the MUGA was still outstanding. It was noted that the final payment had not yet been made. Suitable "Conditions of use" signs for the entrance gates would be investigated and erected when the gates had been re-set.

(Action Cllr. Eelsey/Clerk)

b. Official opening. The Chairman reported that this was in hand with Mrs. Janine Corbie at the District Council. A date at the end of March would be favourable. (Action. Mrs. Corbie/Chairman)

c. Rectory Lane Playing Field. A recent inspection of the playing field showed that it was not up to the required standard. The weeds under the swings and the climber needed spraying and removing and some of the equipment was looking particularly sad. A quotation had been requested from Acorn Services for the following:-

- i. Spray and remove weeds;
- ii. remove 1 x set of junior swings. Re-arrange swings to incorporate 1 x junior swing and flat swings;
- iii. pressure wash/clean wooden equipment
- iv. when weeds have been removed, lay rubber matting to increase safety surfacing and maximise existing bark surfacing
- v. replace scrambling net when received from Playground Spares

Cllr. Moriarty reported that she had removed several piles of dog faeces from the playing field and that the sign at the entrance was being ignored by dog walkers. New "No Dog" signs would be investigated along with trying to identify the culprits.

ii Highways.

a. Speed monitoring. The latest results had been received from PCSO Horne and distributed to Members. The "20mph" banners on the village green were now showing signs of ageing. To be removed. It was noted that the permanent 20mph speed reduction signs from Highways were due before the end of the financial year.

b. Devolution Pilot

Resolved – that Ashdon not take part in the devolution pilot due to the additional management that would be required along with the additional insurance and legal expertise that would be needed. (Cllr. Thorn)

c. Weight Limit – Spriggs Lane. A request had been received from a resident of Water End for a weight limit in Spriggs Lane/ Water End to protect this beautiful rural lane from further destruction by heavy vehicles. To be taken up with Highways. (Action Clerk)

iii. Village Hall. The light had been installed at the entrance by White Horse House. Several tiles on the north side of the roof were shelling out. A quotation would be sought for their replacement.

It was noted that the hall had been left in an untidy state with "junior" furniture left across the hall which required stacking prior to the hall being set up for the meeting. It was also noted that the heaters had been switched off at the mains rendering the frost stats inoperable. Therefore, the hall was bitterly cold and the object of installing the new radiators totally defeated. A letter would be written to Mr. Ray Hammond, Chairman of the Village hall Committee to seek his advice as to why the heaters had been switched off and to prevent it happening in the future. (Action Clerk)

- v. Progress on the co-option of one new Member. No further progress.
- vi. Assets of Community Value.
Cllr. Wheatley had submitted the application for the listing of the windmill
- vii. Railway Carriage at Ashdon Halt. Following inspection it was deemed that the carriage was now beyond restoration.
- viii. Telephone Box, Steventon End. Cllr. Thorn reported that there was power to the telephone box and that a new light was required at a cost of £32.00. Quotations for painting the box had been requested.

9. Correspondence

Various emails distributed to Members. Members had been requested to raise any matters received by email under correspondence. None were raised.

- i. Essex Village of the Year Competition.

Resolved – not to enter the competition in 2019 (Cllr. Hayler)

10. New Items. There were no “New Items”

11. New Planning Applications

- i. UTT/18/3467/CLE. Certificate of Lawfulness for existing garage conversion Woodlands, Walden Road

No Comment

- ii. UTT/18/2389/OP. Outline application with all matters reserved for demolition of existing dwelling and outbuildings and the erection of 3no. dwellings Lang Meadows, Thicket, Bartlow Road

No Comment

12. Planning Applications Determined

- i. UTT/18/2883/HHF. Convert cart lodge to bedroom, with linked access to main and addition of new window to north elevation of barn Chapel Farm Barn

Conditional Approval

Cllr. Rolfe and Cllr. Moriarty left the meeting at this point.

13. Accounts (Appendix ii)

- i. Budget 2019/2020

Cllr. Elsey presented the Budget for the fiscal year 2019/20. He recommended that it be approved.

Resolved – that the Budget for the fiscal year 2019/20 be approved (Cllr. Elsey)

- ii. Precept for the fiscal year 2019/20.

Following discussion it was noted that the council was running with a financial deficit and that in the financial year 2018/19 monies had been taken for reserves to complete the new fitness area at All Saints Close and to complete the installation of LED street lights a year earlier than originally planned. Members considered that, due to financial pressures, the precept should be increased.

Resolved – that the precept for the fiscal year 2019/20 be set at £34,000.00.
(Cllr. Hayler)

Whilst this was a substantial percentage increase it only represented a sum of £1.77 per week to actually live in the village in a Band D property. Members considered this a suitable sum to pay for the services the Parish Council provided and to maintain the village environs in good order.

- iii. Cemetery Fees and Charges.

Resolved – that the Cemetery fees and Charges remain unchanged for the fiscal year 2019/20 with the following amendment:

- i. Para.1 iii. that the paragraph be changed to read “a person whose age at the time of death exceeded 16 years” not 6 years as currently.
(Cllr. Wheatley)

- iv. **Resolved** – that the Accounts ,Appendix ii, be passed for payment. (Cllr.Elsey)

14. Items for the Next Agenda.

- i. Village Neighbourhood Plan
- ii. Stansted Airport Planning Application letter of objection

The meeting concluded at 9.29pm.

Signed

Chairman

County Councillor Report, January 2019

The right bus services for the people of Essex

Essex County Council has launched a consultation to find out more about how important evening and Sunday local bus services are to the county's residents and to ask them for their views on some proposed changes to how those services are delivered.

With low passenger numbers on some services, the County Council is looking again at the way it supports local bus services on evenings and Sundays.

Around 85% of the bus network in Essex is run commercially; this includes most of the daytime and peak period services in and between towns. These services will not form part of this consultation.

The remaining 15% of services are not commercially viable and are subsidised by the County Council; this means that the commercial bus operators will not run them. These non-commercial services mainly operate in rural areas and at less popular times for travel, such as in the evenings and on Sundays. The supported and evening services (buses that operate after 10pm) are the ones that are being reviewed. In particular we are reviewing supported services that run after 10pm on weekdays and 11pm on Saturdays; and on Sundays reviewing services that run after 7pm and run more frequently than two hourly.

The consultation also looks at how we might develop the right type of service to meet the travel needs of residents and visitors by making more use of a wider variety of ways for providing services, such as smaller vehicles, 'demand responsive' transport or taxi-buses.

Residents will also be asked their views on giving local communities and their representatives at district, town and parish level the opportunity and funding to commission local bus services in their area, based on their understanding of local needs and where this can be done more cost effectively.

Cabinet Member, Cllr Ray Gooding said: "We have a strong record of supporting local bus services particularly in comparison with other local transport authorities who have significantly reduced the level of support that they offer."

"At present we spend around £9m of taxpayers money on these services each year. However with the number of passengers in some cases falling below six per journey, coupled with the strong financial pressure on all local government funding, means that we have to look very carefully at how we provide our services to ensure that the limited funding available is focused where it will do most good and where the local communities need it."

"We know that buses are important to many people. The consultation is the opportunity to have your say on our proposals. It's imperative if you have any comments or concerns to include these within the consultation, all of which we will consider."

Essex County Council has made £750million of savings since 2010 and continued financial pressure means that unless we change, reform and re-invent services, they will stop keeping pace with what people need and we will not succeed in delivering for our county.

This means that, alongside those services which we retain and continue to invest in, or invest even more in than in previous years, some will change and some will no longer be provided in the way they are now.

The consultation launches at 12noon today, Wednesday 19 December 2018 and runs until **22 March 2019**.

The consultation can be accessed at www.essex.gov.uk/local-bus-consultation

Paper versions are also available to collect from all libraries and on request.

Residents can also complete the consultation over the phone by calling 03457 430 430 or e-mailing passenger.transport@essex.gov.uk.

Thousands have their say on new libraries strategy

The consultation on the future of Essex library services has reached its half-way point, and with six weeks to go there is still plenty of time to have your say.

As of 9 January, over 13,000 surveys have been completed – including online, paper copy and via the Essex contact centre.

There have also been responses from organisations and from people and organisations who are interested in running community libraries, where that could be a potential future option. Responses have been received from individuals, families, children and young people.

During the consultation, information drop-ins are being held at each of the 74 libraries the council runs around the county. Based on public feedback, the Council has changed its approach to these. Instead of one two or four hour slot, the Council is offering a week at each library when the public can drop in at any time the library is open to ask questions and find out about plans for libraries in the future. The change means people can access the drop-ins at a more convenient time and those who may need help to access the information have the time and space to do so.

If you need help to access the consultation and survey, library staff can provide it.

The drop-in sessions are to provide information not take feedback – completing the survey is the best way to ensure individual views are recorded and heard.

Essex County Councillor Sue Barker, Cabinet Member for Customer and Corporate said: "We are half way through the library consultation and I'm really pleased with the high number of responses, and the amount of engagement, we've had from Essex residents and community groups. Thank you everyone for taking the time to share your views. The consultation is open till 20 February so I would encourage anyone who hasn't yet completed the survey to please do so."

The survey can be found [here](#). Residents are encouraged to complete the survey online, however, if this is not possible the survey can be completed over the phone on 0345 603 7639 or a paper copy, large print or EasyRead version can be sent to you.

Essex Children's Social Care rated Outstanding

Essex County Council is today celebrating the fantastic news of achieving an Outstanding rating from Ofsted for its children's social care services.

Following a period of assessment in November 2018 Inspectors judged the local authority to be outstanding in its services to children, with consistently high standards applied across the county, innovative and high quality help and support available and a well-trained and highly skilled workforce.

The report in particular praised the staff and social workers, highlighting that "Staff enjoy working in Essex; morale and motivation are high. Workers describe the work they are able to undertake with children and families as the reason they came into social work." And that "Social workers know children very well. They demonstrate a good understanding of their needs and plans and are passionate about securing and sustaining improvements in their lives."

Cllr Dick Madden, Cabinet Member for Children and Families said: "This Outstanding rating is simply the best way to start the New Year. It is a fantastic achievement to all working in children's social care in Essex and I want to say thank you to each and every person who has played a part in making Essex Ofsted Outstanding. The journey to becoming an Outstanding children's social care service has been greatly rewarding. We have invested in our staff, improved practice and developed innovative methods but all the time we have ensured at the heart of everything is the drive to improve the lives of our vulnerable children and their families. I could not be more proud of this achievement. Congratulations to all involved."

The report also highlighted that the strong political and corporate support has meant the local authority has been able to manage demand and prioritise children's needs across the council, with praise for senior leaders in their pursuit of excellence for children.

The full Ofsted report can be found at www.reports.ofsted.gov.uk

A reminder to apply for your child's primary school place this Christmas

Children are entitled to start school in the September after their fourth birthday, meaning parents/carers of children born during the period 1 September 2014 and 31 August 2015 must apply by **15 January 2019**.

Essex County Council has warned that any applications submitted after the deadline will only be considered once all on-time applications have been determined.

The council has also encouraged parents to use all four of the preferences available and to check the admissions criteria for each school they wish to apply for to ensure they have the best chance of being offered a preferred place.

Applications can be made online [here](#).

Best Wishes for the New Year

Simon Walsh
January 2019

Appendix ii

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING MONDAY 14th JANUARY 2019 10th DECEMBER 2018 to 14th JANUARY 2019

Monies Received		£
S. Hayler. Refund of deposit for solar panel survey		150.00
Interest BPA 3/9/18 – 2/12/18		8.08
Interest BPA 3/9/18 – 2/12/18		0.53
Monies passed for Payment		£
Grasshopper Lawncare. War memorial grass treatment	24.00 Ch.No. 102372	
G. Marsh. Village Handyman. December 5hrs @ £20/hr	100.00 Ch.No. 102373	
E.ON. Electricity. December Account	67.65 Ch.No. 102374	
D. Green. Ink cartridge	16.50 Ch.No. 102375	
Balances at Bank 14 th January 2019		
Current Account	£3,238.86	
Savings Account	£1,068.24	
Savings Account	£15,909.27	